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S H O C H I K U

Kabuki Play

"SHIOBARA-TASUKE KEIZAI-KAGAMI"

II Acts, 7 Scenes

Written by Shin'ichi IWAYA

To be presented at the Embuja Theatre

From March 3, 1949 by Kichiemon,

Gato & Tokizo



"SHIOBARA-TASUKE KEIZAI-KAGAMI"

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SYNOPSIS:

O-Hana, daughter of the master of the big shop Fujinoya, fell in love with the poor charcoal-dealer Tasuke. Tasuke, however, had no mind to accept her because of the difference in their social standings.

Kyunachi the keg-collector, Tasuke's friend, advised her to go to Tasuke's aunt and take good care of her. Tasuke, moved by the good nature and the earnestness of the girl, made up his mind to take her to wife.

The dramatist insists that a marriage should base upon the connection of hearts, not upon locks and social standings.

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----- ACT I -----

Scene I

(A tea-kiosk on the left, where some seed-cakes are laid on the stand. On the right, a part of the bridge Yotsunobashi. A willow-tree stands by the bridge. The black wall of Fujinoya-Mokuemon's house, centre. A little window and a garden-gate in the wall.)

It is toward the evening of a November day, near the bridge Yotsunobashi, Konjo, Edo.

The curtain rises with the sound of a gay music.

A clog-mender, a young girl, a wine-dealer etc. pass across the stage. Soon Tasuke's voice is heard behind the stage.)

Tasuke:            Won't you buy charcoal? Charcoal sold by  
measuring----- Five mon or seven mon  
a basket.

(In response to this, a voice is heard,  
"Hey, just a moment, Charcoal-dealer.  
Charcoal-dealer! Just a moment."

Two or three women, seemingly house-wives  
of tenement houses, come running after Tasuke.  
They gather about Tasuke and buy charcoal for  
fourteen mon or twelve mon from Tasuke.)



Tasuke: No, Mr. Kyuhachi the keg-collector, whom I always meet here. I believe he had come today before I did.

Ok: Oh, you mean the keg-collector, He hasn't come yet.

Ta-: Then I'm earlier than he, aren't I?

Ok: No, the keg-collector is later.

Ta: Ha, ha, ha! Either will do. Give me a cup of tea, will you?

Ok: Sure, I'll serve you a cup of tea.

(She goes out. A voice is heard in the left:  
"Have you any keg? Any empty keg?" Iwataya Kyuhachi (34 or 35 years old) comes in carrying some empty kegs balanced on a pole.)

Ta: Oh, here he is! (Stands up to meet the keg-collector)  
Good morning, Kyuhachi. I was afraid I was later, but I was earlier as a matter of fact.

Kyuhachi: Oh, dear Tasuke. Today I believed I'm earlier, but I'm beaten. I'm so careless I left my towel at a house where I bought a keg. I went back to the house to fetch it, and I was late to come here. Hey, old woman! Give me a cup of tea.

Okuma: We are always talking about you. Fine days will continue, I believe. Before spring comes, my dumplings won't sell.

Kyuhachi: She is so deaf she speaks in that way.  
Give me a cup of tea.

Ok: Yes. I'm sorry I was not clever enough.  
(She goes out hastily.)

Kyu: By the way, Tasuke. You have thought out a  
very good sort of business, haven't you?

Ta: No, --- but as times have become bad, they  
can't buy charcoal by the bag. So I started  
selling broken charcoal which I had collected  
for five mon or seven mon a basket. Poor  
people are glad, and the number of my customers  
grows bigger day after day.

Kyuhachi: It's a very good idea---- But if you earn  
continuously in that way, you'll get too much  
money.

Ta: Oh, dear Kyuhachi! If a man means to  
get much money, he can never be a great  
businessman.

Kyu: Then what shall he do?

T: Well, he may get much money, if he tries  
to. But it's no good. I say to my money:  
"Listen, my money! See what I'm doing!  
Snowy or windy, I work and work in straw  
sandals, cutting down my hours for sleep.  
And what are you doing? I can't let you



stay comfortably in the cash-box. Go and work! Go and work! "Thus saying I strike my money on the hips.

Then, as the money feels painful, it goes out, works and then comes back. It says, "I'm tired. Please keep me." But I answer it, "I am working as you see. You must not be so weak-minded. Go and work." I again beat it on the hips. As it feels painful, it goes out to work again and comes back. At last it says, "Now I'm dog-tired. I can't work any more. Please keep me. I won't go anywhere. I'll never part with you." So I say, "All right. Then I'll keep you. This is a natural and spontaneous way of getting rich."

Kyu: I see. This is the first time I ever heard such a thing. You beat your money on the hips. That's a good idea.

Ta: In one word, I think of others before thinking of my own benefit. I sell good things for reasonable prices. I make good the small margin of profit by working hard.

K: H'm I understand! Now I'll change my way of business. I'll work with the same spirit as yours. Let's compete which of us may have a bigger shop. Now I can't be idle. I'm going to

make a round. Old woman, here is my tea-money.

Okuma: Thank you very much.

Kyu: Tasuke, see you tomorrow.

Ta: I hope you'll work out much money.

K: (Stands up Finding vacant shops in the right)  
Oh, here are two vacant shops. It's no good  
to have these sunny shops vacant. (He carries  
his kegs.) Any empty shop? Any empty shop?

Ta: Hey, Kyuhachi. You mean empty shop?

Kyu: Sure! I'm so careless. Any empty keg?  
Have you any empty keg?

(Kysuke goes out, leaving his tobacco case  
on the chair. Tasuke takes a cup of tea, and  
smokes. A melody of "Koto" is heard from  
within Fujinoya.

Tasuke: Oh, I hear a sweet melody.

Ok: It's koto (harp)

Ta: I know it, but who is playing?

Ok: Oh, it's Fujinoya's daughter playing.

T: Ah! Is she?

(Women beggars' voices are heard in the left.)

Woman Beggar: Give me what money you collected. Hey, give me  
what you collected.



O-Kame: No, I've got none.

(Okame, Shiobara's widow and blind beggar, and Shimataro, eight years old, are carried in from the right by O-Sute, O-Kuro and O-Komo, all women beggars.)

O-Sute: You are only a novice, and you dared to visit our territory ----

O-Komo: House after house.

O-Kame: I'm a blind beggar as you see. I didn't know where I were. --- Please forgive me.

Shimataro: Excuse me, ma'am.

O-Sute: You speak in such an insinuating voice, but I won't be deceived. I'm not so deceivable.

O-Kuro: Let's drag them without sparing!

O-Komo: Let's drag them!

O-Kame: Please excuse me!

Beggars: Come with us! Come with us!

(The three try to carry O-Kame away.

Tasuke tries to mediate their quarrel.)

Tasuke: Hey! What are you doing? Don't tease such a poor woman. I'll mediate between you. So please forgive her.

O-Sute: But, listen! This blind beggar is only a novice. And she had the audacity to visit our territory.



O-Kuro: She went begging before us without establishing any connection with us. I'll surely reduce our earning. We can't stand it.

Tasuke: I see. I see. I'll talk to her well.  
So forgive her for this. (He gives them each one mon.)

O-Sute: One mon each is too cheap, but----

O-Kuro: As you are an honest tradesman, we can't ask you more.

O-Komo: Let's agree.

Tasuke: Then go away.

O-sute: She's only a blind, and---

O-Kuro: There's no such---

O-Komo: A cheeky woman.

(They go away to the left.)

O-Kame: Thank you, thank you ever so much, sir. I have no words to express my gratitude.  
The mother and son are now saved by your favour.

(Tasuke looks attentively at her, and is astonished.)

Tasuke: Oh, you are my aunt!

O-Kame: What? ---- And who are you?

Tasuke: I'm your nephew Tasuke who parted with you at Numata nine years ago.

C-Kame:

Oh, are you Tasuke? ---- I'm ashamed----

(Tries to run away.)

Tasuke:

Aunt! Do you understand you are shameful?

(Music) You were born in a warrior's family  
and called "Mademoiselle"

And how is it that you've come to such a  
situation as I see. When I was eight years old,  
you were married to Kakueemon Shiobara as his  
second wife and gave birth to a girl named  
O-Ei. When my father was dying, I married with  
O-Ei at my father's bedside.

But you forgot my father's will. When you  
were nearly forty, you misconducted with Taji  
Hara. Besides, you let my wife O-Ei carry on  
with Tazaburo, Tanji's son.

What you did was quite an animal's doing, wasn't  
it? I bore with patience, thinking that if I should  
lose temper, I must quarrel with my blood relations.  
At last you tried to kill me. So I left my  
home and came up to Yedo.

Aunt! Thanks to you, I may reach a merchant's  
estate. I express my thanks.



O-Kame: Dear Tasuke. Please forgive me. In spite of my age, I was mad with love, and I was cruel to you who were the heir. It was heaven's judgment that on the very night of the wedding a fire broke out at the barn behind the house. When we were ~~running~~ rushing to and fro in the smoke, O-Ei and Tanzaburo were bitten to death by our black horse which was frightened by fire.

Tasuke: Were O-Ei and Tanzaburo were killed by the black horse?---- And what, what about the horse?

O-Kame: The horse also died in the fire.

Ta: Oh, the horse died then!

(Vacant, with tears.)

O-Kame: Then I left the home place and took my way to Yedo. But on the way, a rascal robbed me of my clothes, to say nothing of my travelling money. Besides Tanji met with a violent death. Disasters followed, and I lost my sight---- and am now so miserable. This is all punishment for what I did to you and your father. Dear Tasuke! Now I know it for the first time. Now I'm awake. I'm ashamed. Please pardon me ----- Pardon me.

(She sobs.)

Shimataro: Mother, is this gentleman my uncle who you always speak of?

O-Kame: Yes.

Tasuke: Then is this Tanji Hara's child?

O-Kame: Though he was born as a result of my misconduct, it's too bad to be born a beggar. -----

Dear Tasuke! I have nothing to complain of my situation. But the sins of the mother have been visited to the son.

This boy who is not at all responsible is--- indeed----- poor.

Tasuke: But for your misconduct you wouldn't have given birth to him.---- But--no, even if you were a stranger to me, you are a good woman when you turn a new leaf. I feel sorry for you as a good woman. Please come with me.

O-Kame: What?

Tasuke: I naturally should take you in and care for you. But I can't do it for my dead father's sake.---- Well, all right. Fortunately my master of Yamaguchiya has a vacant shop at Kameido. Though it's a humble place, please live in it----. I'll provide for your living, although it may be scanty.



O-Kame: Are you going to help me who is quite an enemy of yours?----- Oh, I can't see. But Shimataro. You ought to remember well your uncle's face and repay his favour.

Shimataro: Yes. Thank you ever so much, sir.

Tasuke: Oh, poor fellow! You speak as a beggar does---- Now aunt, come with me.---- Here's my tea-money.

(Tasuke goes to the stage passage. The other two follow him. O-Kame stops a while.

Tasuke: What's the matter?

O-Kame: If we, these dirty mother and son, go with you, it will be your shame.

Tasuke: Aunt. If my five fingers are dirty, can I cut off one of them?

O-Kame: What a kind heart you have! ---- Dear Tasuke. I'll never forget your favour. Shimataro! Say your thanks once again.

Shimataro: Thank you ever so much, sir.

Tasuke: Hey, you speak again in a such a way.

O-Kame: I'm ashamed.

(Music. O-Kame, and Shimataro, the latter taking the former by the hand, follow Tasuke. They go out through the stage-passage. O-Hana, daughter of Fujinoya, and O-Kane, her maid-servant,

follows them with their eyes. They had been looking at them for some time at the window. Kyuhachi, who had come back to get his tobacco-case left behind and also been looking at Tasuke. They all are struck with admiration.

O-Hana: Oh, what a kind heart he has!

Kyuhachi: The mother and son who were quite enemies----

O-Kane: Were also helped. How reliable--- he is!

(Kyuhachi exchanges glances with O-Hana.

Kyu: Any empty keg? Empty keg!

(He goes into the tea-booth.)

Kyu: (Taking the tobacco case he had left).

Ah! I find it! I find it!

O-Kuma: As I'm dull of hearing, I could not quite understand, but is the beggar ~~and~~ an acquaintance of Tasuke?

Kyu: Tasuke was lucky that you are hard of hearing.

If you could hear, he would be ashamed.

O-Ku: Poor woman! Did she come so long a way?

Kyu: What?

She is stone-deaf

O-K: Henjo is not far away. (Gets into the kiosk.

O-Kane comes in from the garden-gate behind.)

O-Kane: Please, keg-collector!



Kyu: Yes, ma'am. Who are you?

O-K: I'm Fujinoya behind here.----- Would you come with me?

Kyu: Oh, that mansion---kindly sell me---, then I'll go to the kitchen.  
(Going away.)

O-K: No, not that way.

Kyu: What? (Wood-clapper.)

O-K: Please come this way.

(She leads Kyuhachi to the garden-gate.  
He follows her, looking suspicious.  
Stage revolves.)

Scene II

Fujinoya's tea-room. Tastefully arranged. A garden with trees, pine needles scattered and stepping-stones. Part of the main house with a round window is seen. Solo. Kyuhachi the keg-collector comes in led by O-Kane.

O-Kane: Please come in.

Kyuhachi (Looking around): Oh, the mansion of a purveyor to the Tokugawa government is splendid!

O-Kane (Serving a cushion): Please come here.

Kyuhachi: N--- n-- No, thank you. If a keg-collector should go into such a fine mansion, his legs would become crooked.

O-Kane: Ho, ho, ho!

Don't be so reserved.

Please come in.

Kyu: As I'll buy them as high as a I can, please be quick in giving them to me.

O-Kane: My master will soon be here.

Kyu: The master personally sell away empty kegs in such a big house as this?

O-K: Ho, ho, ho! --- No, my master has something to talk with you.

So please come into the room and wait here.

(Going to leave.)



Kyu: Please. If he wants to negotiate,  
I'll go to the kitchen.  
(Treads on scattered pine needles.)

O-kane: You'll be scolded if you tread on the scattered  
pine needles.

Ky: I see, I see. 'Nervously'  
Then I'll go this way. (Going)

O-K: Please don't! The grass will be ruined.

Ky: I see. I see. (More embarrassed, places his  
pole against the stone lantern.)

O-K: Oh! Please don't place your pole against  
the stone lantern.

Ky-: Ah! What shall I do? ----- That I am given so  
much trouble only for a keg or two -----.  
(Just then, O-Hana comes in with some buns.)

O-Hana: Oh, dear keg-collector.  
What is the matter?

O-kane: Now have a cup of tea, please.

Kyuhachi: Then I'll take it.  
(Eats a bun.)  
(Moknemom, the master, comes in.)

O-Kane: This is my master.

Kyuhachi: Eh? (When he is surprised, the bun sticks in his  
throat.)

Moknemom: I'm sorry I've kept you waiting.

Ky: Have I the honor of seeing the mater, then?

Mok: Yes, I am Mokuemon Fujinoya.

I'm glad to meet you.

Ky: Oh, thank you very much. My name is Kyuhachi Iwataya. And ---- how many empty kegs have you got, sir?

Mok: I'm sorry to trouble you when you are very busy, but I've got something to ask of you.

K: I see, sir. Prices of kegs change from time to time, but a new cask such as Kurumatsu or Onigoroshi will be three or four hundred mon.

Mokuemon: Oh, no. What I should like to ask of you is not about casks.

Kyuhachi: What? Not kasks?

Mok: Well, about the charcoal dealer who often takes a rest with you at the tea-kiask at the back of my house.

K--: Oh, do you mean Tasuke the charcoal dealer?

M---: Is he called Tasuke? And where was he born?

K--: I believe he was born somewhere near Numata, Joshu. They say that he was the heir of a distinguished family, but owing to various reasons he came up to yedo eight years. Then he was an employee at a charcoal wholesale dealer's shop called Yamaguchiya at Sakumacho in Kanda. During his long years as an employee he collected all the broken charcoal to be cast away.



Now he lives next-door to me, and sells the broken charcoal by measures for five or seven mon.

He is kind and honest and frugal. -----

and do you want to buy his charcoal by measure when you live in such a big house?

Mokuemon: I might buy it for whole of my property, if ---.

Kyuhachi: What?

M: Well, dear Kyuhachi, Has Tetsu a spouse?

K: ~~Well, dear Kyuhachi:~~ What do you mean by "spouse"?

M: ~~Has Tetsu a spouse?~~ I mean a wife.

K: Oh, no. Of course not.

M: Is he a bachelor, then?

K: Yes, a single man. He, he, he! He is quite ----

MO: I see. (To O-Hana contentedly)

Hey, O-Hana! Have you not prepared tea?

Be quick.

O-Hana: Yes ---- (Serves tea to Kyuhachi)

Kyuhachi: Don't trouble yourself for me, please.

O-Hana: Please take a cup of tea,  
though I can't prepare it well.

Mokuemon: Though my daughter is inexperienced, please be  
kind to her.

K: /Yes, I ----.

O-Kane: Now dear keg-collector. Please take the cup of tea ~~which~~

which Mademoiselles has prepared.

K: Then I'll take it. (Takes up the cup.)

How sweet the Uji tea smells!

Is this called Jokisen?

M: You seem to be a master of tea.

K: Oh, no, but --- (Drinks) And is this the Ugasawara ~~style~~  
style?

O-Kane: No, Mademoiselles is trained in the Urasenke school.

Ky: Oh, the Ura ----. So it naturally tastes bitter ---

It's very nice tea.

(He drinks with efforts.)

You with bent head.

Kyusuke: You mean you are serious?

Mokuemon: Surely.

K: And by what reason do you want to marry  
with that charcoal dealer, Mademoiselles?

M: She is not attached to his style,  
but she expects something of him.  
She expects he has something promising  
about two inches below his navel.

K: To what bath-house does your daughter go?

M: How slow of understanding you are!

She is attached to the charcoal dealer's heart.

K: Oh, I see. The heart is two inches below  
the navel? Is it right, Mademoiselles?



O-Hana: Oh, I'm shy.

K: I'm much impressed Mademoiselles sees his heart and  
is going to marry him.

And you want to marry her with him.

He is lucky. All right. I'll see to it.

M: Will you comply?

K: Yes, I'll surely act as a go-between.

O-Kane: Mademoiselles, the keg-collector says

Kyuhachi (Sitting down on the ground and bowing):

O-oh, Mademoiselle!

O-Hana: My father is coming. He can't talk with you there ---  
Please come in.

Kyuhachi: No, no, thank you.

O-Hana: Kane! Lead the keg-collector in.

O-Kane: Yes ----- I asked him again and again, but -----

Please come in, dear keg-collector!

Mademoiselle is asking you to come in.

Ky: No, no, thank you. I'll be here.

O-Kane: Oh, why do you sit on the stepping stone? ----

Please come in. (She helps Kyuhachi take off  
the straw sandals and leads him into the room.)

O-Hana: I'll serve you a cup of tea though I can't do it well.  
Please have some cakes.

Ky: Oh, no. ---- Not I.

(O-Kane forces him to take a bun.

O-Hana begins to prepare tea.)

- Mokuemon: Now, dear Kyuhachi ----  
I'm sorry to trouble you, but will you kindly comply  
with my daughter's wish?
- Kyusuke: What do you mean, sir?
- M: To tell the truth, my daughter overheard at the window  
much of what you and the charcoal dealer talked  
daily at the tea-kiosk behind my house,  
and she has become quite attached to the  
charcoal dealer ----- And I thought I would get her  
married to him by all means.  
We talked over and over, and decided to ask you  
to help us, because you are his intimate friend.  
So we have asked you to come in.
- K: I didn't know it. Then Mademoiselles dearly  
loves Tasuke and wishes to marry with him?  
But are you serious?
- M: I am a man permitted to wear a sword,  
and I implore he will act as a go-between.  
Ease your mind, please.
- O-Hana: But if Tasuke says no -----.
- Kyusuke: Oh, he has no reason to say no ----.  
When I tell him that you want to marry him,  
he might go mad out of ecstasy.
- O-Kane: Oh, if such a thing should happen to the dear  
bridegroom!



K: Ha, ha, ha! It's a joke.

He has no reason to refuse ----.

I assure you.

Mokuemon: I feel at ease to hear it.

K: Then I'll go and tell him the story as soon  
as I can. He will surely be glad.

M: I leave all things to you.

K: Certainly, sir.

M: Please bring us a good news.

K: All right, sir.

(He is going away, when O-Hana says anxiously.)

O-Hana: Rather ----- I'm anxious yet ----

M: Please, Kyuhachi!

Kyuhachi: Yes! (Looks back.)

Mokuemon: I'm sorry to repeat my question.  
But are you sure of success?

K: Yes, I have taken the matter in hand.

I'm stake this.

(Pats his own neck. Wooden-clappers Stage revolves.)

SCENE III

Well-side outside a tenement house (Aioicho Honjo).

A drying place in the left. A little while after the time of the preceding scene. Towards evening.

O-Roku, a housewife of the tenement house, is washing rice. O-Tama, another housewife, is washing. O-Toki, another housewife, is taking in the washing.

O-Roku: Ah, I'm disgusted with husband.

Day after day he drinks sake and sleeps.

O-Toki: But he is better than mine, because he comes home.

My husband Gempachi has not come back since the day before yesterday.

O-Roku: When I think why I married him.

O-Roku: I feel deeply sorry when I think why I married such a fellow. I kept on weeping last night all through the night.

O-Tama: On the contrary, Tasuke is ----

How do you think of him?

He goes out for trade early in the morning when stars are still in the sky.

O-Toki: I never saw such a hard-working man as he.

It is my loss until the days of my children and grandchildren that I did not marry him.

(Just then, Gempachi, O-Toki's husband, comes back and overhear.)

O-Roku: Surely.

O-Toki: When I'm reborn, I'll marry a hard-working man as Tasuke.

O-Tama: So will I.



O-Toki: He is kind, good natured and hard-working.  
What a difference from my husband Garappachi!

O-Roku: Indeed -----

(She finds Gempachi or Garappachi.) O!

Gempachi: Hey, my girl! You simply praised that charcoal dealer!

O-Toki: Oh, did you hear what I said?

You were lucky to hear it.

I hope it will cause you become a hard-working man as Tasuke.

Gempachi: What? You headstrong girl!

(Grabs at her.)

O-Toki: What are you going to do?

Don't carry your jealousy too far!

Be ashamed!

(Thrusts him away.)

Gempachi: What!

O-Toki: Hey! Be puffed up with pride after you become a diligent man as Tasuke.

O-Tama: I agree with you.

You better speak in such a way when you are a man like Tasuke.

Gempachi: You nasty fellows!

What insult!

O-Toki: Fellows are men. We are women.

Gempachi: Do you know what I'm going to do?

(Again grabs at her.)

O-Toki: You brute! What do you do?

I won't be bested. (They struggle.

O-Tama tries to part them.)

O-Roku: We all will be your enemies when you  
speak ill of Tasuke.

O-Tama: Yes, yes. Why are we wrong when we praise  
Tasuke?

O-Roku: When I'm reborn, I also will be wife to  
a man like Tasuke.

O-Tama: If you tease O-Toki, we'll fight with you.  
(The three housewives push Gempachi back to the  
gate. Gempachi goes away.

The women follow, him but O-Roku appears again.)

O-Roku: It's quite absurd. -----

He himself is an idle fellow, and gets  
angry when we praise Tasuke.

How jealous he is!

(She resumes washing.

Tasuke appears from the upper door to wash rice.

He squats down beside the well and washes rice.)

O-Roku: Oh, dear Tasuke. Today you have come home very  
early, aren't you?

Tasuke: Yes, as I have something to do,  
I stopped my work earlier and came home.



O-Roku: In this Aioi-cho and throughout Honjo  
there is no one so hard-working as you are.

Tasuke: It's natural that a man should work.

I have nothing to be praised of.

O-Roku: That's it! ----- When you speak in that way,  
you are so fine that you almost have helos.  
You are too good to be left alone as a bachelor.  
(Looks at him attentively.

Her husband's voice calls her.)

Voice of Rokusuke: Hey!

Where are you! Baby is awake!

O-Roku: Shut up! I'm going now.

You are indeed a great help.

(She goes out grumbling, with washing in her hands.

Tasuke keeps on washing rice, when

Kyuhachi comes in through the gate.)

Kyusuke: Hey, Tasuke! ----

Tasuke: Oh, here you are!

Tasuke: Kyuhachi. Why are you in such a hurry?

Kyusuke: Why am I in such a hurry? A splendid  
luck has come down on you from Heaven.  
I've come running because I wanted to inform  
you of it as soon as I can.

---- Oh, how thirsty!

(Drinks water of the well.)

Tasuke: What on earth has happened?  
(Stands up and looks at Kyuhachi.  
His face is stained with charcoal.)  
Kyuhachi: Well, a great good luck has come to you.  
(Looking at Tasuke's face.)  
Oh, your face!  
Ha, ha, ha! ----- Hui hu! hu! -----  
Ha, ha, ha!  
Tasuke: What's the matter? -----  
What's the matter?  
Ky: Ha, ~~h~~ Ha, ha! -----(Looking at Tasuke's face.)  
Your face ---- Ha, ha, ha!  
Your face ----- Mademoiselles, a ha, ha, ha!  
Tasuke: What's the matter? What on earth is the matter?  
Ky: Well, nothing ---- nothing. Ha, ha, ha!  
Ha, ha, ha!  
Te (Indignantly):  
I'm busy. (Going away with rice.)  
Ky: Oh, wait! Wait!  
T: What's the matter? (Looks back.)  
Kyusuke (Looking at his face again.): Ha, ha, ha!  
Your face ---- Mademoiselles, Ha, ha, ha!  
Tasuke: I'm going now. (Going.)  
K: Oh, wait! Please wait!  
I won't laugh any more -----  
No, not any more.



T: Have you got anything more to talk to me?

Please be quick. (Looks back.)

K: (Gazing into Taisuke's face)

A, ha, ha, ha! Taisuke!

I'm sorry, but let me laugh once more ---

U, a, ha, ha, ha! U, a, ha, ha, ha, ha!

T: (Gets angry)

I'm going! (Going)

K: Sorry, I'm sorry. I won't laugh any more.

I'll never laugh again.

So please listen to me.

T: (Comes back helplessly.)

K: You know Fujinoya at Yotsume,  
don't you? That Fujinoya called me in.

I naturally thought that they meant  
to sell me empty casks.

But when I went in, I was led through several gateways  
in the large garden into a tea-room at  
the innermost part.

Soon "ademoiselles" came.

Then the master came.

I was entertained with tea and cakes.

Well, I was given these buns. Taste one.

Tasuke: Oh, It looks nice. I'll have one.

(Begins to eat a bun.)

Kyusuke: And the master said "Keg-collector.

I have something to ask you.

Please grant my wishes."

Thus saying the master of Ujinoya who is permitted to wear a sword made a bow to me.

T: And what did he ask you?

K: Well, ----- the Mademoiselles from behind the fence saw us every day when we talked about all sorts of topics at the tea-kiosk at Yotsume, and she is quite attached to you, the master said.

T: What?

K: And she says she wished to marry you by all means, and she asked me to act as a go-between.

Tasuke! Your luck has turned, hasn't it?

Tasuke: And no kidding?

Kyusuke: Absolutely no kidding.

The master and Mademoiselle asked me quite seriously. I thought no better luck could be found throughout Japan, so I said O K.

T: Dear Kyusuke!

I appreciate your kindness, but please ask her to be excused. (Going.)

K: Oh, Tasuke! Please wait! ----

Why do you want to be excused?

T: If you ask the reason,



I'll answer your question. -----

Can the Mademoiselles get up early in the morning and prepare food and wash clothes?

K: She has been brought up with all tenderness. How can she do such a thing?

T: Then I can't say yes. (Going again.)

K: O! o! Wait! Wait!

T: Any other business?

K: She can't do such things, but she can do any other thing.

T: Then will she go out with a bean paste basket in her hand to buy things cheap?

Kyusuke: Nonsense!

She has grown up knowing nothing of the world.

She knows nothing about

"Cheap and high."

How can you expect her to do such things.

Tasuke: That's why I can't say yes.

(Going again.)

K: Wait! Wait! (Tasuke stops.)

Though she can't do such things, there are lots of things she can do.

- T: Then can she make fuels?  
At night she must sometimes shampoo my shoulders ----
- K: Shut up!  
How can you let her do such a thing when she has  
soft, maple-leaf-like hands.  
Remember, she was born in the most celebrated  
family in Honjo.
- T: So I can't say yes. (Going again.)
- K: Oh, wait! Please wait!  
Tasuke! you are too quick-tempered.
- T: The matter is simple enough.  
Please refuse her offer.  
The proverb goes: cow to cow and horse to horse.  
If a poor man like me should get a wife  
from such a celebrated family, it would surely  
be an ill-assorted marriage.
- K: It may be so, but there will be some measure ---
- T: No, I won't. I definitely won't.  
(He says these words abruptly and gets into the  
house and shuts the door.)
- K: (At a loss)  
Hey, Tasuke! Tasuke! ----- Oh, what shall I do?  
(A sound of bell. Stage revolves.)



S C E N E - IV

Tea-ceremony house of the Fujinoya's, again. Lamps and lanterns are lit. Mokuzaemon's Yokyoku recitation, as well as O-Hana's hand-drum, can be heard through the round window.

A Pause.

Soon O-Kane, the maid, shows Kyuhachi into the room saying: " Well, sir, the master's been waiting for you."

Kyuhachi looks embarrassed.

Kane: Step in, please. The master's coming soon.

Kyu: Well, well, yes ----- (Sits in a corner, looking much bewildered)  
(O-Kane retires. Soon the sound of the recitation and the drum ceases, and Mokuzaemon comes in followed by O-Kane.)

Moku: Oh, sorry to have kept you waiting, Mr. Kyuhachi.  
(Sits down.)

Kyu: Well, sorry to have troubled you. Well, I'm giving you back the bean-jam bun you gave me.

Moku: What do you mean?

Kane: Was it sour?

Kyu: Oh, no. It was very nice. I had one more myself. Two in all, you know. Excuse me please.

Moku: Well, is Mr. Tasuke -----.

Kyu: Well, sir, well -----.

(O-Hana peeps at the round window.)

Kane: You said only sometime ago that he'll be mad with joy.

Kyu: (More embarrassed) Well, I was mistaken.

Moku: Then, does he mean to -----.

Kyu: He does. He means to refuse this.

Moku: Why -----.

Hana: (Bursts into tears at the window.)

Kyu: I'm so sorry. (Squats and trembles.)

(A pause.)

Moku: Well, Mr. Kyuhachi, don't you hear her voice? You proposed only some time ago to go between him and her and now you just refuse.

Kyu: I'm really sorry about it. It's a shame for me to come back after what I said, but I have come to ~~have~~ bear witness that I'm not to blame and to return your huns. Excuse me, please.

Moku: I won't.

Kyu: What do you say?

Moku: You said that you'd be hanged if you couldn't persuade him.

Kyu: Well, yes.

Moku: I am a merchant privileged to wear side-arms.



It is such a disgrace for the family that I've  
been put to this shame.

I'll just get your head and commit a happy despatch  
myself. Sit upright here.

(Thrusts the floor with his sword.)

Kyu:

Oh, help.

(Starts and makes to the garden.)

----- Dark Change. -----

S C E N E - V

Spectator's Hall.

(Kyu-hachi comes into the spectator's hall, followed by the spot-light.)

Kyu: Here's a how-do-do. Isn't there anything nice to do? Haven't you got any idea? (Asks the audience while going to the director's room) Tell me what to do, please. (To a spectator) Haven't you got any idea to cut my way through? Any idea? (Meantime Kyuhachi walks between the 1st and 2nd class to the stage passage. One gentleman addresses him.)

Gentleman: Mr. Keg-collector -----.

Kyu: Oh, have you got any idea? Tell me what it is, please.

Gentleman: This is it.

(He whispers something in Kyuhachi's ears.)

Kyu: Thank you very much. You've saved me.

(Runs into the main stage with joy. Dark change.)



Scene VI

(Shabby house of O-Kame's near Kameido. A Buddhist stupa on the right. A well - a clothes dryer on the left. A narrow doorway back left.)

Here O-Kame and her little son make a bare living supported by Tasuke.

An afternoon some days after the last scene. It is raining. The sound of a wooden gong can be heard from the right.

As the curtain rises, O-Kame sits on the bed suffering from a fit of spasm. Shimataro is boiling herb for his ~~xxx~~ mother. The ballad "Yoiyamachi" can be heard at intervals of the rain. A long pause.)

Shimataro: How are you, mother?

Kame: (No answer. Suffers.)

Shima: Cheer you up a little longer. The medicine will be ready in no time.

(Kyuhaichi appears into the stage passage, looks round and is about to step into the house, when O-Kame cries with pain:)

Kame: Ouch. Ouch.

Shima: The pain again, mother? (Hurries to and takes care of her.)

(Kyuhaichi hesitates at the doorway.)

Kame: Oh, thanks, dear.

Shima: Oh, the herb-kettle is boiling. I'd bring it.  
(Carries the kettle and a cup to her.)

Shima: Here, mother.

Kame: Ouch. What a pain. (Suffers much.)

Shima: What's wrong? Mother, mother, cheer, up.

Kame: What a pain.

Shima (Anxious): I'd just run and fetch Uncle Tasuke.

Kame: Oh, don't.

Shima: But you suffer so much.

Kame: He's a busy man. It won't do worrying him.

Shima: But you'll -----

Kame: It's all right. We should have both died  
but for his kindness. We can't bother  
him any more.

Shima: But you'll die. I can't live if you die.

Kame: Oh, do you think so much of me--- of such  
a bad mother?

Shima: Mother.

Kame: Dear-----

(They weep in each other's arms. A pause.  
Kyu-hachi looks at them.)

Kyu: There are people in this world who pass their  
days enjoying tea-ceremonies, reciting yokyoku  
and playing hand-drum.



As for these people they, live blind and  
lonely when the rain patter on my humble roof.  
There are varieties in human lives.

Kame: Oh, I just forgot it. There's the divine herb  
O-Hyakuso Mr. Tasuke gave me yesterday.

Shima: Oh, it's here.

Kame: Let me take it. Give me a cup of water, dear.

Shima: Certainly.

(Shimataro goes to the well to pull water.  
Kyuhaichi hides himself. Shimataro, is about  
to fall into the well, when Kyuhaichi steps  
forward and catches the child in his arms.)

Kyu: Oh, dangerous. Take care.

Shima: Thank you, uncle.

Kame (Surprised): Is that your Uncle Tasuke?

(Wooden clapper.)

Shima: No, He's a gentleman I don't know.

Kyu: (Seems to be sorry for them.)

(The curtain falls with the sound of  
wooden clappers.)

----- ACT II -----

Scene I

(Three weeks later. An afternoon toward the end of the year. O-Kame's residence again. Some mendings have been made to the house. The furniture, too, shows that she is a little better off now. Some clothes are spread on the frame.

As the curtain rises with a gay music, O-Shige, a poor house-wife of the neighbourhood, is sweeping about the house. O-Kon, another house-wife, appears.)

Kon: Oh, O-Shige, you're working as hard.

Shige: Well, O-Kame has gone to the Myoken shrine and I've been asked to keep the house.

Kon: You needn't flatter her her so much.

Shige: What do you say?

Kon: You mean to get something from the young lady. I see it clearly.

Shige: Don't be so impolite.

Kon: I saw you before yesterday help her wash the clothes and get money.

Shige: Why.

Kon: Give me the broom. Don't monopolize the good luck.

Shige: But O-Kame asked me. I have to stay till she comes back.



Kon: Don't be so obstinent. Your husband has come home and calling you. Don't be so greedy and go home.

(O-Kon takes the broom by force and takes to sweeping. O-Shige goes out reluctantly. O-Hana, accompanied by Kyuhachi, comes in through the stage passage. Her clothes are plainer and simpler.)

Kyu: Now, Miss O-Hana, it's three weeks since you've come to take care of his aunt. Take courage and catch him.

Hana: Well, I feel shy, Mr. Keg-collector.

Kyu: Mr. Keg-collector? Say Uncle.

Hana: Oh, I should, of course.

Kyu: Let's hurry. (They reach the doorway.)

Kon: Oh, young lady.

Hana: Good day. Is Mrs. O-Kame out?

Kon: Oh, she feels much better today and has gone to the Myoken shrine.

I keep the house for her.

Kyu: Thanks for your trouble. Now that my niece has come, you needn't stay. Thank you.

Kon: May I go? But---you see--- it was so dirty here and I've cleaned all about the house.

Kyu: I know, I know. (Takes out some money)

It's very little, but it's for you.

Kon: Am I getting it again? Oh, many thanks.

(O-Kon goes out, laughing flatteringly.)

Kyu: Now, you're to display your ability.

I have a hunch that Tasuke will come here today.

Hana: Oh, is he coming here?

Kyu: He's been to Kazusa to lay in a stock of charcoal. But I've heard he came back to Edo yesterday.

Hana: What shall I do?

Kyu: Oh, don't blush so much.

Hana: What am I to do? Tell me what to do, Mr. Keg-collector.

Kyu: Mr. Keg-collector again? You're my niece, you see.

Hana: Oh, I see.

Kyu: Well, when he comes, put your hands before your knees and say "Welcome sir" (mimies.)

Hana (imitates): Welcome, sir.

Kyu: That's it. Then you bring a brazier and a tobacco tray. Then you make tea.

(O-Hana makes gestures.)

Then he'll ask who this charming girl is. Well, then, you'll peep into his face and say coquetishly: "I'm a stupid girl called O-Hana,



a niece of Kyuhachi's.

Hana: I'm abashed.

Kyu: You needn't be. This is what is called a marriage interview. Any guy will be charmed if you glance at him with your clear eyes.

Hana: Don't, uncle.

Kyu: Ha-ha-ha. Well, after that, you'll just boil rice, wash things and massage O-Kame. He cannot help wishing you for wife.

Hana: Oh-----

(O-Kame comes in, led by Shimataro.)

Shima: Oh, sister Keg-collector. When did you come?

Hana: Oh, hello.

Kame: Oh, Miss O-Hana.

Hana (doing as told by Kyuhachi): Oh, welcome.

(Bows)

Kyu: That's it.

Kame: Oh, are you here, too, Mr. Keg-dealer?  
Thank you for your kindness.

Kyu: Don't mention it. And how are your eyes?

Kame: I've become better thanks to O-Hana's medicine.  
I think I see things, though very vaguely.

Kyu: I'm glad of it.

Hana: That reminds me. It's time you take another doze. (Gives him a doze of medicine with a cup of water.) Here, Mrs. O-Kame. It's the usual medicine. Take it, please.

Kame: Oh, thank you. Thank you very much.

O-Hana's kindness reminds me of O-E:----

Hana: Who's O-Ei?

Kame: My daughter.

Kyu: What happened to her?

Kame: Well, I beg you to listen to me for a time. O-Ei; was my only daughter----- whom I married to Tasuke, her cousin. Well, it's my shame, but I teased him out of the house and then forced her to marry another man. Heaven punished it and a fire started on the wedding day. O-Ei, as well as her new ~~husband~~ husband, was devoured by the house-horse----- I became blind and wandered about. Then I was saved by Tasuke, my old enemy.

Well, Mr. Keg-collector----Tasuke is a saint--- a god or a buddha----- to have been so kind to me and my son, when I was so harsh with him.

(Bursts into tears.)



Kyu: He's a big man --- This young lady ---- I mean, O-Hana, is deeply moved by her.

Kame: As for me----- it's my duty to recommend him a better wife than O-Ei and revive the Shiobara family. Just imagine what I feel, Mr. Keg-collector.

Kyu: Oh, I know, I know. It's my duty as his friend, too, to get a good wife for him. I'll do so for you, Mrs. O-Kame.

Kame: Oh, I'd be so happy.

(The time-bell tells five. O-Hana gets ready for supper wiping tears.)

Kyu: That's five o'clock. Now, O-Hana, I'm to go to the shop Kazusaya before it gets dark. You'd better get ready for supper as usual.

Hana: Be back soon, uncle.

Kyu: Don't be so childish. Ha-ha-ha.

(Kyu-hachi goes out. A song is heard behind the stage.)

~~Kyu~~ Shimataro: May I go and play for a while, mother?

Kame: You may, but be back before it gets dark.

Shima: O.K.

(Shimataro goes out. Soon Tasuke comes in through the stage-passage bearing an empty basket.

Tasuke (at the passage): I've been away for a long time. I hope  
aunt is all right.)

Tasuke (at the doorway): Are you all right, aunt?

Kame: You're Tasuke?

Hana: (Is frightened.)

Tasuke: I'm sorry I've been away for a long time.  
(Steps in.)

Kame: Sit here, will you? I'm getting better and  
better, thank you.

Tasuke: I'm glad to hear it. Oh, the house has  
become very tidy.

Kame: Mr. Keg-collector's niece helps me every day.

Tasuke: Oh, does she? It's very kind of her.  
(Sits down) Well, I had to go, because the master  
of Yamaguchiya had something to prevent him  
from going himself.

(O-Hana offers Tasuke a brazier and a cup of tea)

Hana: Welcome, sir. A cup of tea, please.

Tasuke: Well, it's the first time people offer me tea  
in this house. Who's she, aunt?

Kame: The niece of Mr. Keg-collectors'.

Hana: I'm a silly girl named O-Hana.

Tasu: So you are Kyuhachi's niece. Thank you for  
your kindness-----

Hana: Oh, no. Remember me, please.



Kame: She's so good and kind-----better even my own daughter. I'm so grateful.

Tasu: Oh, is she? Thank you, miss.

Hana: Don't mention it, please. (She gets shy and awkward and spills the tea on the floor.)

Hana: I'm so sorry.

Tasu: Don't worry. I'll wipe it.

(He is about to take the house-cloth

Hana: I'll do it.

(They look at each other.

Two: (Laugh conquetishly.)

(A pause.

Soon Kyuhachi comes back. Noticing that

Tasuke is there, he peeps at the door.

O-Hana takes to preparing for supper.)

Tasu: Well, aunt, I've got something to please you today. I've been rather successful in my trade so that the master of Yamaguchiya proposes me to set me up in business. I'm to start a little shop on the main street.

Kame: I'm glad to hear it.

Kyu: Oh, I'm so glad to hear it. (Steps in.)

Tasu: Oh, Mr. Kyuhachi. You've been always so kind---

Kyu: You'll do me the same thing, I'm sure.  
Well, you have beaten me, Tasuke, for we  
once promised to compete in being established  
in our own little shops.

Tasu: Now I remember. But it's only that I've been  
a little luckier than you.

Kyu: I'm very glad, anyway. But, now that you're  
to be settled in a fine shop, something is  
lacking, I'm afraid.

Tasu: What's lacking.

Kyu: You know, of course.

Tasu: I don't.

Kyu: Don't pretend not to know.

Tasu: Really, I don't know.

Kyu: How irritating you are.

Tasu: You are irritating. Out with it, Kyuhachi.

Kyu: You have to understand. There is a fine shop-----  
there is a fine master---well, then, it's only  
proper that there is a fine mistress of the  
house.

Tasu: Well----maybe.

Kame: Mr. Keg-collector has a good reason to say so.  
I wish you would get a good wife and revive the  
Shiotara family.



Tasu: But there's no girl who would marry me.

Kyu: Don't say so. That daughter of the master of Fujinoya.

Tasu: Never happen. She can't keep house.

Kyu: Will you marry her if she has learned how to?

Tasu: No, Fine young ladies of those big houses---- they can't.

Kyu: I see. Well, then, Tasuke, will you take this niece of mine?

Tasu: Oh, what?

Kame: It's a good idea, Mr. Keg-collector.

Well, Tasuke, this young girl here can boil rice, wash clothes, go marketing and even massage----- You'll be so happy if she'll marry you.

Tasuke: (Is moved.)

Kyu: Will you?

Kame: I bet she'll make a good wife for you.

Tasu: (No answer.)

Kyu: Now, Tasuke, be a man and answer clearly.

Tasu: Well----but-----I'm shy, you know----I can't  
(He seems to have taken fancy to her.)

Kyu: It's all right. (Very loud.)

Kame: Oh, you frighten me. But, Kyuhachi;  
how about the girl?

Kyu: You mean O-Hana? She's long been in----

Tasu: What?

Kane: (Gets surprised.)

Kyu: Isn't it so, Miss O-Hana?

(Wooden clappers.)

Hana: Oh, uncle, ---- (Seems bashful.)

Kyu: (Takes O-Hana in his arms and rejoices.)

(The shishimai music is heard gayly, as the  
day becomes darker curtain)



Scene II

(Kyuhaichi appears before the curtain and addresses the audience.)

Kyu: Well, ladies and gentlemen. Tasuke and O-Hana are going to be married soon, thanks to you. Thank you again for your good suggestion. Well, the good result comes from the fact that those two young people loved each other heart to heart.

Well, this month, March, is the month of the doll's festival. You must have your hina(dolls) displayed at your houses. Those two dolls. "lord-doll" and "lady-doll", sit close by each other on the stand.

It's not only the beauty in figures that they symbolize---it is the conjugal harmony. Well, I see many pretty young ladies among you, ladies and gentlemen. I'm sure they're expecting good husbands to come to get their hands. Well, young ladies, be very careful in your choice and marry the ones you can really love. That's the way to make good homes and contribute to the reconstruction of Japan.

Oh, it may have been to forward of me, a keg-collector, to interfere with such a thing, but I'm so happy about Tasuke and O-Hana, that I can't keep silent. Well, I'll put an end to my silly talk --- Good luck, everybody----

(Retires)

(Wooden clappers.)